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THOUGHTS ON SATANIC INFLUENCE

C. COWAN. M. D

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Thoughts on Satanic Influence.

Modern Spiritualism Tested.

By C. COWAN, M.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THOUGHTS ON PROPHECY," ETC.

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For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil.

1 John iii. 8.

And when they shall say unto you,
Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits,
and unto Wizards
That peep, and mutter—
Should not a people seek unto their GOD?
For the living to the Dead!
To the Law and to the Testimony—
If they speak not according to this Word,
It is because there is no light in them.

Isaiah viii. 19. 20.

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PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the publication of the following "Thoughts," nothing has taken place, necessitating any modification of the statements or sentiments then advanced.

The author again sends them forth, believing them to be in harmony with God's Word;—adapted to present circumstances;—and, with the hope, of

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their being blessed to the removal of those sickening doubts, which so painfully beset many anxious minds, when dwelling upon the terrible and mysterious subject of Satanic Influence; or when brought into contact with the literature, or phenomena, of Modern Spiritualism.

A recent article, in the Cornhill Magazine, entitled "Stranger than Fiction," has somewhat re-directed popular curiosity and attention to the subject; but since it discloses nothing materially different from what has previously been described, no special examination is required; nor have the facts there recorded, as yet, evoked a crowd of philosophical explanations, so

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eagerly volunteered in the case of Table-turning.

In England, the progress of Spiritualism has been singularly circumscribed; while, in America, it has found a more genial soil; numbering, at the present moment, upwards of three hundred thousand, among its votaries.

When taking a retrospective glance of the whole movement, the mind is not so much impressed by the strangeness of the facts, as by the evident *limitation* which has been imposed; and by the comparative insignificance of the manifestations, which have hitherto been permitted.

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Still sterner testing days, of the faith of God's people, are at hand. Intellect, Miracles, and the course of Providence itself, will all seem to be ranged on the side of Delusion! Man's greatest difficulty will be to realise the faith, for which, he will then, be specially called, to witness and to suffer. Reason and Common Sense, will rise up as an impassable barrier between the soul and its God! Christianity will appear, as if a Dream! and the Mission of Christ, a failure! To resist such a torrent of enthusiasm in behalf of Evil—the foundations of Faith must be laid in contact with the substance of the Rock itself; and Philosophy be condensed into the axiom, "*IT IS WRITTEN.*"

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Blessed he, who, in that dark hour, will be enabled, confidently to look up, and boldly to impugn, the Universal LIE!

READING, 1ST JAN., 1861.

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PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

THAT we are living in strange and eventful Times, and that there are agencies at work, other than can be recognised by outward or ordinary observation,—all thoughtful and scripturally-instructed minds, are ready to acknowledge.

That such has always been the case, in each preceding period of human

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history, is not less evidently true; for the facts of man's Fall and of man's Redemption, are indicative of opposing Spiritualities; and involve a causation and consequences, which, of necessity, extend beyond the actual condition of the creature, who is himself the illustration of a probationary state.

At the same time, it cannot be overlooked, that existing habits of thought, greatly indispose to the practical admission of spiritual interferences; for modern Science, seems so rapidly to encroach upon the region of the supernatural, as to tempt man to anticipate that all things will ultimately be brought within the range of philosophical explanation.

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It is often difficult, in the creed of many Christians, to find standing room for the miraculous: so little familiarity do they evince with what God has spoken; and so unwilling are they to admit, in all their literality and distinctness, the statements of revealed truth upon the subject.

Reasonings and solutions, the most inane and superficial, if only clothed in the garb of a scientific phraseology, obtain easy currency; and no instances of credulity and delusion can be cited, illustrative of ages that are past, more extreme and irrational, than those which at present prevail.

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It will, in truth, ever be found, that human Wisdom, and human Folly, culminate together!

A highly gifted and deservedly esteemed Investigator, has recently remarked, that the ascription of Table-turning and its associated phenomena, to supernatural agency, is a proof of something essentially defective in the education of the Age.

He might with far greater accuracy, have asserted, that the solutions which, he and other of his brother philosophers, have severally advanced, as accounting for the remarkable phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, are still more strik-

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ing illustrations, of the deficiency he so feelingly laments.

It may, at all events, be said of the advocates of Satanic agency, that the power, they assume to be operative, is at least, equal to the production of the effects; and the true reason of the unpopularity and abuse, which this section of observers has encountered, is simply because they have appealed to Revelation, and not to Science, for a solution of the difficulty.

In the following Essay, no attempt is made, to exhaust the evidence of Scripture, or to make the reader acquainted with the views which others have entertained; but simply to present the sub-

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ject in that form which it has gradually assumed in the mind of the writer, and to appeal to God's word, as the alone test, of the truth or fallacy of the opinions advanced.

Were such a scheme of authorship more generally adopted, much wearisome prolixity would be avoided, and information more easily attained; for though the author's thinkings may not be the best, they are yet those which he has personally appropriated, and which he is, consequently, most competent to express.

To those, of our readers, who are desirous of a more detailed acquaintance with the phenomena, to which allusion

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is particularly made, at the close of the Essay—we would recommend the recent volume on "Spiritualism," by Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter; Cahagnet's "Spiritual Telegraph;" Mr. Spicer's "Sights and Sounds;" and one or more of the six or seven *weekly* newspapers and periodicals, now publishing in America, as professed vehicles of information from the unseen world.

Mr. Beecher's "Review of the Spiritual Manifestations;" the able Lecture by Mr. Godfrey; the writings by Mess. Gillson, Dibdin, and Clay; with the anonymous publications of "The Coming Man;" "The Veil Uplifted;" and "Mesmerism Considered;" may all be advantageously consulted.

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It is only by extensive familiarity with the existing Literature of Modern Spiritualism, that we can arrive at any correct idea of its true nature and extent; and it is because the attention of observers, in England, has been so exclusively occupied with some of the more popular but least important Phenomena, that the information now prevalent, is so inadequate for the formation of sound and comprehensive conclusions.

As in the case of Witchcraft, and numberless other forms of error now obsolete or forgotten—though influential in their day and generation—the peculiarities of the present moment, will probably be found to be very unequally

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distributed, and but of limited duration.

Their gradual, or perhaps *sudden* disappearance, will hereafter be adduced, as the most unanswerable proof of their never having been real.

Upon such a conviction, fresh forms of spiritual seduction will take root, and rapidly germinate; each age successively vaunting its escape from the follies of its predecessor, while itself, the victim of delusion more consistent with the circumstances, the knowledge, and the temper of the times.

We change our Costume, but not our Nature; and great as are the varia-

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tions in the complexion of a sin-stricken world, its essential features, are, at all times, identical; and will ever remain so, until the dynasty of Sin shall be superseded by one of Holiness, and the usurpation of SATAN, give place to the kingship of CHRIST!

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THOUGHTS

ON

SATANIC INFLUENCE.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM TESTED.

Section I.

We cannot, perhaps, more appropriately preface our reflections upon the difficult and solemn subject which is now to engage our attention, than by stating, that, in its elucidation, Originality, can only degenerate into Presumption; and Novelty, become synonymous with Error.

Removed, by its nature, beyond the narrow precincts of man's Philosophy, we must either abandon the investiga-

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tion as one of vain and profitless surmise, or confessedly derive our information, from a strictly *supernatural* source.

If we *have* a Revelation,—and we are now only addressing ourselves to those who admit that we have,—its authority, of necessity, is absolute and supreme; and human wisdom, evidently consists, in ascertaining and believing, what its Divine Author has seen fit to communicate.

How eagerly, we might naturally have imagined, would such a Document have been perused by the creature for whose benefit it was intended! How rigorously would its contents have been scrutinised, and every fragment of its precious unveilings gathered up with more than miserly acquisitiveness!

And yet, with an open Bible in our hands, and no other source of similar

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information in our power—how melancholy the truth, how characteristic of man's fallen condition, that we resort to it with reluctance, and that our acquaintance with the facts which God has mercifully revealed, is, for the most part, so superficial,—so incomplete.

The simple truth is, that God's Word, though frequently *read*, is but seldom *studied*. We are accustomed to regard it as too exclusively a volume of *Principles*, rather than of *Realities;* as a manual of *Devotion*, rather than as a narrative of *actual Events*.

While we cull its promises and threatenings, and rightly seek their application to our individual necessities, we are indifferent to, or forgetful of the larger purposes involved, and attain to no adequate conception, of the overwhelming interest and importance of the record, when considered as a *Whole!*

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Section II.

To be profitably read, the Bible must be regarded as a HISTORY *throughout.*

We must ever remember that GOD alone is its author. That its structure and design are uniform and complete—however varied the instruments employed, or the circumstances attending its composition;—and that the region of the unfulfilled, is as literally sketched and defined, as that which has already been explored.

With such convictions, the study of revealed truth, not only enlarges the boundaries and deepens the foundations of our faith, by elevating our conceptions of the majesty and extent of Redemption work;—but it diffuses a light

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upon the Past, the Present, and the Future, which enables us to be intelligent spectators of the scene more immediately around us, and extricates the mind, from a thousand false reasonings and misapprehensions, by which it must otherwise be misled.

It cannot be too strongly or too frequently asserted,—however facts may seem to militate against its truth—*that the real cause of the contrariety of opinion which prevails upon all fundamental questions,—whether Social, Political, or Religious, may be directly or indirectly, assigned to the greater or less influence, which the literal statements of God's Word exert upon the mind.*

It may be said with equal truth, NOW, as to the Sadducees of old, "YE DO ERR, NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES, OR THE POWER OF GOD!" And the axiom applies in all its force, to the

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deeply mysterious and important inquiry, to which we are now desirous of directing the reader's serious and attentive consideration.

Section III.

We may commence by the observation, that nothing is more striking in God's account of the circumstances attendant upon the fall of Man,—fraught as that fall was, with consequences so momentous and enduring,—than the naked simplicity of the narrative, both as regards the Tempter, and the Tempted.

It seems, as if intended, at once, to lead the mind to the perception of the real nature of *Sin!*

This, in its essence, *is, Rebellion against GOD!*

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Its origin is *within*. Its malignity, is not to be measured by the pageantry or importance of outward events, but by the altered relationships, which inevitably arise, between the Creature and the Creator. And hence, the reason of its consummation in all its plenitude of penalty and pollution, under conditions, which, to an unbelieving mind, may appear unimportant and trivial.

Let God be dethroned from the Heart, and so far, as creature subjection is concerned, He is dethroned *altogether*.

Refuse Him the allegiance of the Will—and all our after offerings, are but vain oblations.

When Adam swerved from obedience, and the desire of independence took possession of his Soul, the whole aspect of his moral nature was at once reversed; and the Child, in a moment,

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was transformed into the Rebel. Redemption, therefore, if more than a mere phrase, involves, in its very nature, the renewal of the *Heart*, and its restoration to loyalty and holiness;—without which, our natural instincts are sufficient to inform us, that all outward reformation, and ritualistic worship, are nothing better than a mockery and delusion.

Section IV.

Another inference, deducible from the fact of Man's ruin, is this;—*that Sin in the Tempter, must necessarily have preceded Sin in the Tempted.*

Now, by SIN, we do not mean *an abstract principle of Moral Evil*, but, as in the instance before us, an *individual act*

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of rebellion on the part of Satan, of a character essentially similar to that of Man; the former, being mainly actuated by the ambition to *Rule*, the latter, more immediately, by that of self-government, and by the desire to *Know*.

MORAL PRINCIPLES, DETACHED FROM INDIVIDUALITY, HAVE NO EXISTENCE!

To talk of Good or Evil, as a kind of polarized antagonism, apart from *personality* of good, or *personality* of evil, is not only to utter words without knowledge, but to strike at the root of all moral obligation, and to reduce Religion to a practical farce.

There is none *good*, but one, and that is GOD. There is no moral good or evil, in God's creation, except in the *Hearts* of those, who are in accordance with, or in opposition to His Will.

The attempt, therefore, which has frequently been made, to confound *moral*

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qualities, with nervous, magnetic, electric, odyllic, or any other permeative forces, employed by the Creator as the formative and controlling agents of the material world;—to trace these from their simple to their more complex relationships, until they re-act upon the highest of all elaborated organisms —man's nervous system—and thence issue forth under the form of mental or moral manifestations;—is one of those subtle and Satanic delusions, which, under various names and disguises, has been the secret tendency of many modes of thinking, and of investigation, which have specially characterized the last half century.

Such a notion, however feebly operative, if not utterly and for ever rejected, contains the elements of a volcanic overthrow of the foundations of all true belief—reduces sin and responsibility to

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mere idealisms—makes Scripture an unintelligible jargon—and is preparatory to the adoption of an ultra-infidelity.

We again, with earnestness and solemnity, repeat—that if Sin be not an individual condition, it is a *Fiction!* If, God and Satan, be not *Persons*, they are virtually non-existent! If creation be a mere conglomerate of *Principles*,—a system of action and re-action—working out its own developments, "upon a plane of everlasting progression" *we*, *Ourselves*, become part of, and are merged, in the great impersonated whole; and Heaven, and Hell, and Death, and Judgment, are but the residuary terms of a puerile and effete philosophy!

How such discomforting phantoms should ever have originated, were they not representatives of some dread *Realities*—we must leave to the Sceptic to explain.

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The arguments demonstrative of the *Personality* of Satan, might have been greatly extended, had we entered upon a simple analysis of the scripture record in regard to this mighty Being; but we have thought it better to insist upon the ruinous consequences of an opposite hypothesis, believing such a method of reasoning, to be less frequently employed, and that to many minds, it will prove, more practically convincing.

Section V.

Who then, we may now ask, is SATAN? What are his schemes in relation to Man?

His Nature is Angelic. His rank and importance pre-eminently distinguished. His intelligence vast; and his

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creature capacities, beyond all human imagination. His knowledge and experience, are, doubtless, proportionately great; and when, *self-tempted by ambition*, and jealous of all rule and authority, he yielded to the thought, and madly invaded the supremacy of his Creator—such was his position and influence in the courts of Heaven, that a great multitude of Spirits were seduced from their allegiance, and have ever since been the associates of his daring though hopeless Revolt!

When "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"—and "the sons of God shouted for joy" at the contemplation of such manifold proofs of the wisdom and power of Jehovah—and when man entered upon the scene of his dominion, so gorgeously arrayed for his reception, himself made after the image of God, and

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in the enjoyment of the uninterrupted fellowship and favour of his Creator;—*then was it*, that this Globe became the Theatre of Satan's machinations; and his *Motive*, that of involving our race in an apostacy similar to his own, with the twofold design, of gaining fresh accessions to his ranks, and of still further disturbing and defeating, the government of the Most High.

MAN'S destruction, must therefore be regarded, as a means of advancing Satan's selfish ambition, rather than as the ultimate end of his efforts!

Satan gains nothing by our ruin, beyond enlarging the sphere of his rebellion, and increasing, as he vainly and madly imagines, his ultimate chances of success. "All these things will I give thee," was the Usurper's proud and imperious offer. He valued not "the kingdoms of this world and all their glory;"

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he glutted not in hecatombs of human victims. *His, was an all-absorbing personal ambition,* aiming at God's etèrna throne, and satisfied, with nothing less, than to subvert or share His Empire.

He knew, full well, that one faltering look, one bending of the knee, from man's Redeemer and earth's immaculate and rightful King, would have fatally wounded the character, and jeopardised the authority of the Most High!

True, it was, that such an expectation, was vain and monstrous; and before the irresistible majesty of Emmanuel's calm reproof, the false "God of this world," quailed and fled;—yet, from this most marvellous of incidents, we are permitted to glean a deeper insight into Satan's actual power and purposes, and to comprehend more clearly the nature of the world's past history, and

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of that eventful Crisis, which will quickly terminate the present Dispensation.

Section VI.

Another mysterious—yet clearly revealed fact,—the knowledge of which, greatly enlarges our apprehensions of the complicated vastness of sin's mighty tragedy—though difficult to reconcile with man's finite estimate of God's inscrutable ways,—is this—*that Satan and his Angels, are not YET, finally debarred from all communication with Heaven! And that such, will only be the case, shortly anterior to the second Advent of Christ!*

The testimony of God's word, upon this most interesting subject, we believe

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to be clear and decisive, however seldom thought about, or unreflectingly rejected.

Whatever may be the bearing and application of those passages in Peter and Jude, where it is said, that the "Angels which kept not their first estate, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day,"—and also of that expression of our Lord, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,"—though the former most probably refer to that special form of Angelic Apostacy which preceded the flood, and the latter may be regarded as retrospectively, or prophetically, spoken—yet, to the eye of faith, they cannot be destructive of those still more numerous and direct revelations, which tell us of Satan's presence in, and communication with, the Heavenly Regions.

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Twice, we are told, in the Book of Job, that "there was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, *and that Satan came also among them*;" and that the Lord *conversed* with him. Micaiah prophetically "saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of Heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left, and *a lying Spirit came forth and stood before the Lord.*"

To Zechariah was shown "Joshua the high priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord, *and Satan standing at his right hand to rebuke him,*" the Lord again conversing with Satan: and lastly, we would adduce that most wonderful apocalyptic passage, which clearly applies to the close of the present Dispensation, where we are told, "that there was war in Heaven: *Michael and his Angels* fought against *the*

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Dragon; and the Dragon fought and his Angels, neither was their place found any more in Heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that *old* Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the *whole world;* he was cast out into the earth, *and his Angels were cast out with him.*"

Then it is, that we hear the rejoicings of the Heavenly Host—of those elect Angels of God, who, confirmed in a state of happiness, and united with the Church upon earth under the common headship of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,—at length emancipated from the conflicting presence of God's great enemy and his apostate followers—triumphantly proclaim, "*now* is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for *the accuser of our brethren,* is cast down, *which ac-*

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cused them before God, day and night."

The horses and chariots of fire unveiled to the "opened eyes" of Elisha's discouraged servant, with many other incidents scattered throughout the sacred volume, might be cited as more or less inferentially indicative of the same fact; but for our present purpose, we are content to rest the assertion upon those passages, where it is more distinctly and literally declared.

Section VII.

That such should be the case, though to many the idea may not be familiar, is really not more improbable or incomprehensible than the long continuance of the struggle, between God

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manifested in the flesh, and Satan, *upon the Earth.*

We should ever remember, that in the outburst and issue of Sin, whether originating in Heaven or elsewhere, *all created intelligences* were interested and involved.

The character of Jehovah and the principle of his Universal Sovereignty were impeached; the stability of the Divine government, in every department of the universe was implicated; and any act of *successful, unpunished* aggression, either by Men or by Angels, rendered Omniscience and Omnipotence no longer attributes of Deity, and confounded all essential distinction between the Creature and the Creator!

If these then were the all-pervading consequences of Sin,—no matter where or by whom it might be manifested—can we wonder, that so long as the

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standard of rebellion was unfurled, and Heaven's rulership contested, that conflict and disturbance should vibrate through all ranks of sentient existences, and that every creature should be actively arrayed on the side of God's friends or of God's enemies?

Indeed, the conditions we are now supposing, are everywhere admitted throughout the whole narrative of Scripture.

But two Empires are ever mentioned. At the head of one, embracing all moral good, is the incarnate *JEHOVAH*. At the head of the other, embracing all moral evil, is *SATAN*.

But two classes of belligerents are described. The children of Light, and the children of Darkness.

But two results are predicted. Victory on the part of Christ, with everlasting life and glory to his faithful

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followers; defeat to Satan and his hosts, and the confounding of apostate men and angels in one indistinguishable doom.

If rebellion *originated* in Heaven, Earth is the battle ground, where men and devils receive their final overthrow; and from the beginning to the termination of this mighty contest, both ranks of intelligences, are unceasingly and correspondingly involved.

When we reflect, that the bruising of the serpent's head by the seed of the woman, was included in the first promise of man's redemption—that Emmanuel died upon the cross for its accomplishment—thus spoiling principalities and powers—that he is now seated as man's representative High Priest, at the right hand of the Majesty on High—that angels are employed to execute God's judgments upon the earth and sent

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forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation—and that the emancipation of a single human spirit from Satan's cruel bondage, is a cause of angelic rejoicing—the statement, that the war in Heaven and on earth, are parallel and intimately associated events, will be viewed as no speculative possibility, but in strictest harmony with the whole design and teaching of the Scriptures of truth.

Section VIII.

If the preceding observations have been attentively considered, we are now somewhat prepared, to form a more correct estimate, of the nature and object of Satan's interference with the affairs of Men.

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And here we would enquire, what is the true solution of the complex problem of our individual existence?

Is it the attainment of any conceivable results, as regards our outward and visible life?

Most assuredly not.

That "a man's wealth consists not in the abundance of the things he possesses, is an expression of experience responded to by all minds not degraded to the level of the brute: and the soundness of the calculation, made by Him who knew what was in man, "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul," if sometimes questioned in the day of prosperity, is ever acknowledged in the day of our Death.

Man's whole relationships to earth, are now of a transitory and dislocated nature: while, his higher and everlast-

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ing interests, are centralised in the world which is to come.

His *inner life* is therefore his *true life!*

What he *believes* and *feels*, not what he *does*, *professes*, or *knows*, determines his future condition; and hence all spiritual agencies, whether wielded by God or Satan, have for their ultimate object, the moulding of man's thoughts and feelings, into conformity with, or into opposition against, GOD.

What is true of each one in particular, is necessarily so of man in his collective capacity,—national life, if the expression may be allowed, being nothing more than the aggregate of personal conditions;—and hence the judgment of all associated acts, must be virtually the same as that which is applied to an isolated instance.

Satan's purpose, whether influencing

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the affairs of Communities or of Individuals,— is to instil into our hearts,—through spiritual assaults or through outward circumstances,—forms of thinking and feeling, disruptive of the creature's relation to GOD! It matters not, under what pretence, or by what process, temptation may be effected; because prompting man's disobedience, and uniting and sustaining him in rebellion with Himself, has ever been, and will ever be, the Devil's great object, from the day when he accomplished the ruin of our first parents, up to his last malignant strugglings against a procrastinated, but pre-appointed doom.

The ever-varying conditions of human society—the progress of knowledge and discovery—the adaptations of science to human convenience and luxury—the abounding of associated efforts for

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man's enfranchisement from evil, and for uniting the whole human family into one indissoluble brotherhood;—strange as it may sound, in the ears of many modern philanthropists, all such conditions and combinations, on the part of fallen-man, are not only compatible with, but are actually significant of the lowest depths of spiritual apostacy, and form prominent features of those periods of human advancement, when Satan's efforts to delude, are most actively and successfully exerted.

Section IX.

The more energetically the human mind is roused to a sense of its necessities, and the more earnestly man enters,

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SELF-TRUSTINGLY, *upon the task of social Regeneration, the more actively does he evidence opposition to God, and the more openly assert his creature independence.*

"Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," was the tempter's enticing and successful lure.—And in all ages, and under all imaginable circumstances, can the actings out, of this same principle, be distinctly recognized; while, in the closing crisis of the present dispensation, we are scripturally informed, it will have assumed its widest and most systematic Development.

Social and intellectual progress, however, contributory to man's mundane elevation, can never be regarded as the guage of his spiritual advancement;—for we know, beyond the possibility of doubt, that in the Day, and upon the Scene of vaunted peace and prosperity,

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shall be suddenly poured out, the righteous judgments of a rejected and avenging God.

Hard as such a doctrine may sound, and destructive as it necessarily is, to man's unrenewed hopes and imaginings, it is, nevertheless, the doctrine of Scripture throughout;—consistent with the essential nature of Sin, and the highest attributes of Deity.

Never was there a period, when the intellect achieved greater victories, or was rich with greater promises than now—never was there a time when such gigantic efforts were put forth to mitigate and neutralize social disabilities—and yet, it is not the less true, that there never was a period when the war of opinion more fiercely raged—when wilder speculations were indulged—when the vital doctrines of christianity, and the supremacy of God's word,

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were more insidiously attacked,—and where the conflict, between *CHRIST* and *SATAN*, was more energetically manifested.

To the student of prophetical history, such signs of the times, are recognized as the predicted accomplishments of God's unfailing truth; but by the world generally, so to interpret them, will ever be stigmatized as the baseless raving of a wild fanaticism.

Such in truth were the Antediluvian impressions, when the Flood came, and destroyed them all!—Such were the opinions of the inhabitants of the Cities of the Plain, up to the *moment*, when they were engulphed by a torrent of exterminating fire! And such we are expressly told, will be the utterly unanticipated judgments of an enlightened but scoffing age, when earth's Creator and Redeemer, shall be revealed as King

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of Kings and Lord of Lords, "to tread the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God!"

No truth, improbable and revolting as it must be to the natural heart, requires to be more strongly urged upon the attention of every thinking being, than the inconceivably awful one, we are now contemplating.

When scripturally accepted by the mind, it annihilates self reliance. It gives to man's wisdom the place which God has assigned it.—It delivers us from the ensnaring thraldom of all human confidences. It exhibits the true nature and the ultimate consequences of Sin. It restores God's truth, to its Supremacy;—and makes JESUS the Alpha and the Omega, of the sinner's hope and rejoicing!

It is the judgment which a death bed's experience instinctively elicits;—it is

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the light of the world to come, reflected back upon a living and an acting world;—and its truth, will be universally confessed by the ransomed and the reprobate, when the mighty reality of earth's past history shall be shorn of all disguise, and Jehovah's judgments, as well as mercies, everlastingly displayed.

Section X.

However stupendous, Satan's power and influence upon human affairs, it must never be forgotten, that he is neither Omniscient or Omnipresent! However implacable his opposition to God, his capability of evil, cannot surpass those limits, which the Almighty ruler of the universe has imposed!

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His, is throughout, a *permitted* but a *restricted* Usurpation. While those progressive historic developments, which God in his sovereignty has predetermined, move steadily onwards, and will infallibly result in the re-establishment of His rule and authority—Satan—powerless to arrest—is ever vigilantly watching his opportunity to disturb—ever adapting his operations, to fresh conjunctures of circumstances, as they successively arise.

His vast intellectual resources—his practical knowledge of man's heart—his uninterrupted acquaintance with the entire course of this world's history for nearly six thousand years—combined with his unquestionable knowledge of the probable future—so far, at least, as he is capable of attaining it, by the exercise of a profound intelligence in the examination of the record of revealed

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truth—not omitting his access to heavenly places, and the incalculable number of his subordinate agents — all combine to impress us with the immensity of his sway, and the greatness of the warfare which is now going on.

That *Sin*, would not be banished, by the removal of Satan from the scene—Sin, as we have already pointed out, being an individual condition, and not an abstract principle or liability—yet nothing more clearly discovers the vastness of the agency of the great enemy of souls, than the fact,—that when again permitted to go forth after the thousand years of Millennial blessedness, we are told, that with energies unimpaired, and a heart unsubdued, he again succeeds, in apostatising a vast multitude of our race, and in combining them in one desperate, but now final struggle, against God.

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The deep unfathomable mystery of such events, must be no barrier to their simple reception and belief. They were clearly written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the world have come; and whether we adopt, or reject what Jehovah has seen fit to reveal, he will not the less certainly, "do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act, upon the earth!"

Section XI.

Another guiding consideration in our estimate of the question before us, is, *that the character and variety of Satan's devices, are dependent upon the proximity of crisis, and the greater or less prevalence of light and truth in the world.*

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Wherever false worship prevails, and nations are spiritually enslaved, there, the great purpose of the arch-deceiver is virtually effected, and his efforts are rather directed to perpetuate than to disturb the darkness which exists.

Should knowledge enter, and man's spiritual requirements increase, Satan's subtlety, is shown, in providing endless modifications of doctrines or observances, to satisfy the speculative demands of the ever restless Intellect, and the insatiate cravings of a corrupted Heart.

Utterly impotent to alter man's Nature, or to expel the religious sentiment from within, he multiplies false Gods of every form and hue, to excite and misdirect its exercise; while he fosters, man's baser passions, by the lustful and seducing orgies of heathenistic abominations.

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When, in the marvellous providence of Jehovah, that remarkable and unexpected event took place—the election of a special people to carry out God's future purposes, and to re-establish his truth and worship upon the earth,—Satan's exhaustless energies, were afresh aroused; and in the wondrous history of that chosen Race, are unfolded many striking illustrations, of how, his power and influence, were exerted.

It was, however, when GOD was manifested in the Flesh, and He who was earth's rightful King, appeared in the fulness of time and in the garb of humiliation, to put away Sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and to assert His claims to universal dominion,—that the false "Prince of this world" felt the great Crisis of his usurpation to have arrived;—and *then* it was, that his fiendish malice and matchless daring,

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were most remarkably displayed.

How eagerly, we doubt not, he prompted Herod to seek the young child's life! How diligently did he ply temptation, when heaven's voice proclaimed that lowly one, to be the Son of God with power! How skilfully did he fan the Jewish prejudice and hate; excite the Gentile fears; obtain a lodgment in the traitor's breast; and concentrate in one convergent effort the powers of men and devils, against the Holy One and the Just—until a murderer was accepted in his place; until the fearful prayer was uttered, "his blood be on us, and on our children;" and Jew, and Gentile, alike combined, to do hell's bidding, and crucify the Lord of Life and Glory!

What boundless meaning in that agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why

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hast thou forsaken me"! Measureless, as it ever must be, to man's sinful, finite mind, yet nothing less seems adequate to awaken within us, some feeble sense of sin's immensity, some faint conception of the depth and preciousness of Redeeming Love!

That was indeed, the hour, and the power, of *Darkness!*

Nature was veiled in gloom. But in that very darkness, the true Light, had shined. Death and the grave, were conquered. The temple veil was for ever rent,—and the mighty "captain of our salvation, made perfect through sufferings, leading captivity captive, and bearing gifts for men, (*not Devils,*) ascended victoriously on high, having offered up *one sacrifice for sins for ever*, and sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool!"

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Around Calvary, for ever converge, all past and future lines of creation's history.

There, the great fight was fought. Satan's head was crushed. Redemption work was finished. The covenant of Blood, was ratified. Though judgment lingers, and the kingly glory is yet to be revealed,—God's sovereignty and truth were then for ever vindicated; and all his trusting children, may boldly say, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other *creature*, shall be able to separate us, from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

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Section XII.

It must not however be overlooked, that while the purpose, for which the Son of God was manifested, was, "that he might destroy the works of the Devil," and while Jesus gave ample proof of his power and authority when on earth, in that the devils were subjected unto him—yet, *the binding and final overthrow of Satan, was not at that time accomplished.*

Christ's Kingship has not yet been manifested.—The restoration of the kingdom to Israel, is yet future,—David's throne is still vacant.—And the exercise of Christ's authority beyond what was needful for the establishment of the Divinity of his mission, has never yet been exhibited.

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Rejected by the Jewish people, over whom he came to reign,—all the attendant events of Christ's earthly ruler-ship—were alike retarded and postponed; and the Dispensation which intervenes, between the first and second advents of Jesus, is featured *by a great increase, and not by a diminution, of Satanic activity.*

It is, from the *New* Testament, that our information about Satan, is chiefly derived. It is there, that his varied operations upon the Bodies and upon the Spirits of men, are most clearly and minutely recorded; and the believer is urgently exhorted, to watch against and to resist his wiles.

Out of ninety passages, where the Devil is mentioned, eighty-two, are New Testament statements, and all of them, applicable to the existing dispensation.

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The chaining of Satan, is an event specially connected with the closing scenes of these latter days; and distinctly asserted, to take place, after the personal coming of our Lord, and the consequent overthrow of the Beast and the False Prophet.

The immediate object of Satan's imprisonment, is, "that he should deceive the nations no more, *till* the thousand years should be fulfilled; and his incarceration is followed, by the establishment of Christ, upon the long promised throne of His Millennial Glory.

The New Testament, teaches us to conceive of Satanic Agency, as concurrent in almost every act of deliberate sin. He is the prompter of treachery—the Father of lies—the framer of false worship—the suggester of heresies—the inciter of persecutions—the unremitting accuser of the brethren before

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God, and the special Tempter and Foe, of Christ's followers upon Earth.

There is no form of spiritual delusion, that may not be attributed to Satanic influence upon the mind; and Christians of the present Dispensation are especially warned, that they "wrestle not against flesh and blood, *but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"

Satan's actual agency, cannot therefore be over-estimated as to its extent or importance, if Scripture be our guide; and though the fact of its existence, is almost universally admitted by every section of the visible Church, it is by the vast majority of professing Christians, so feebly realised, and so superficially regarded, as to be practically in-operative, and virtually disbelieved.

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While thus strongly insisting upon the vast power of Satan, we are not disguising a wicked attempt to shift the burden of Sin from *Ourselves*, or desiring, in any degree, to lower the Gospel standard of human corruption and responsibility;—but we maintain, that a clear recognition of the nature and extent of the influence of this mighty being upon man, is essential for an intelligent apprehension of Scripture narrative, and of those moral and mental phenomena, which are ever manifesting both within and around us!

Section XIII.

We have already remarked, that where Idolatry prevails, Satan's purpose, as regards humanity, is practically accom-

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plished,—God being divorced 'from the worship of the creature. But, when Christianity was introduced, and Pagan hatred, energized from beneath, failed to quench its mighty truths, and to arrest its progress; *then was it*, that the *corruption* of the system, Satan was unable to destroy, became the great object of his devices. He felt it to be incompatible with his rule, as well as predictive of his ruin; and such was the craftiness of his policy, that upon an effete and expiring Paganism, he skilfully contrived to engraft all the doctrines of christianity and to retain the sword of persecution, against those very truths, which the spuriously compounded system that resulted, was avowedly established to promote.

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Section XIV.

ROMANISM has indeed been often and truly designated, as Satan's masterpiece.

It is a gigantic systematic Scheme of spiritual jugglery, of which man is at once the victim, the dupe, and the abettor.

It is the contrivance of a fallen, but vast Angelic intelligence—ever substituting the false for the true; while it professes to rest upon foundations, which its spirit and history, only demonstrate it is ever seeking to subvert.

Assuming a delegated authority from the most High, it is yet, in all its acts antagonistic to CHRIST. And while

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claiming to be the true fold of God's faithful people, it has ever proved their fierce and most unrelenting exterminator.

For more than twelve hundred years, it has been used by Satan, as the most potent of his instruments to pervert, and to suppress Evangelical Religion; and if its protean adaptations to times and circumstances are beginning to exhaust the ingenuity of Hell,—and if, in its modern actings, it manifests sin's infatuation and decrepitude, quailing before the threatening strife of an awakening intellect—and if Satan, with prophetic instinct, anticipates its speedy downfall, by an irrepressible outbreak of democratic fury:—yet, on all sides, there are rapidly multiplying indications of fresh contrivances, to entrap the judgment, and to mislead the imagination, productive of confusion

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more anomalous and unexpected, than any which had previously prevailed.

Not that there is, in actual conditions, anything essentially *new*; but the existing facilities for rapid utterance and combination, whether for good or for evil, are without a parallel, in any former period of man's social history.

In our own day and within the pale of England's scriptural and Protestant Church, moral and mental monstrosities have been exhibited, which are manifestly, the unsightly progeny of the "father of lies"—antecedents to the outbreak of a rampant Infidelity. Men are clearly given up *to believe a Lie.* Strong delusion, is their fearful heritage, and by the deep deceivableness of unrighteousness, they are hopelessly ensnared.

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Section XV.

RATIONALISM, of every form and pretence, is becoming the successor to Superstition; and the evils of a blind credulity, are giving place to the *worse* results of a daring unbelief.

God's *Inspiration*, and man's *Genius*, are now convertible terms.

Modern wisdom and benevolence are such, that Scripture Truth is beginning to be classed among the records of the past; and Bible Principles, to be regarded as in arrear of *human progress*.

Man is exhorted, to be *his own revelation;* and to reject all things repulsive to the light that is *within*. His views of God are so exalted, and his jealousy for God's character so great,—as to

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justify his denial of what God Himself has asserted; and to reject, as impossible, what revelation distinctly affirms.

ATHEISM, is discarded as irrational; and God's presence in Creation, so liberally acknowledged, that the Deity is confounded with his works; while admitted to be everywhere, He is, practically, nowhere.

Universal Redemption, and the *non-eternity of Punishment*,—are ascertained to be far more consistent with God's love, as well as far more congenial to the Sinner, than the discomforting and dishonouring dogmas of evangelical fanatics!

The idea of *a sacrificial and vicarious Atonement*, is asserted to be a violation of the very instincts of our nature!—And the essential Deity of Christ, to be an insult upon the unity of God;

Sin, in all its bearings and develop-

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ments—though admitted to be an untoward obstacle in our path,—we are assured, will gradually yield, to the reforming power of a rapidly advancing intelligence.

Though the whole Creation, has evidently travailed in pain together until now; and though the prospects, immediately before us, are sufficiently pregnant with difficulty and doubt—we are still confidently told, that there *is* a future, to emerge out of the chaos now threatening—and that man, purified and enlightened by the sad experience of the past, is yet to realize the bliss he has so long and so vainly sought, and to be himself the *Regenerator* of a ruined world.

Such are a few, and but a few, of the daring and subtle notions which Satan is now busily propagating; and notwithstanding the boastings of a vain-

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glorious age, there never was a time better adapted, for the reception and belief of a well adjusted LIE!

Need we pause to observe, that in Socialism, Mormonism, Modern Spiritualism,—and many other false systems, too numerous to mention—we find an ample justification of the opinion now advanced?

Section XVI.

Credulity, be it remembered, is restricted to no Age, or People. Its objects may, and do, vary; but it is ever present, ever active, under all circumstances of human progress or decline.

If GOD be not the object of Faith, it is inevitably perverted and blind.

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Its aberrations, are only more anomalous and extreme, as the intellect of a fallen creature attains its highest activity and cultivation.

We pity and ridicule the superstitions of the past; forgetting, that in the darkest superstitions, faith finds more apology and shelter, than when madly clinging to the naked dogmas of a dreary infidelity!

The last stage of faith's degradation, is when man descends to the worship of HIMSELF! and expunges from his creed, all acknowledgment of the supernatural!

A rampant Unbelief, is only another name, for a limitless Credulity.

To this fearful consummation, the mind of Christendom is now rapidly hastening. Human intellect is usurping the Throne, and ascending the Altar steps. While, under manifold

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pretences, Satanically devised, the authority of the Creator is being pruned and circumscribed, until he is spoken of as the Originator and Spectator, rather than as the Governor of his own Universe.

Section XVII.

There is, perhaps, no sentiment more frequently expressed — even by those who freely admit the great extent and importance of spiritual agency — than their unflinching confidence in the stability of "*nature's laws!*"—and their utter disbelief, that Satan or any other power, will ever be allowed to interfere with them. With such reasoners, the "laws of nature" are very similar to the "laws of fate," with which neither

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God or man could intermeddle, and by which Jupiter himself, was bound and fettered.

The very notion, that a *Miracle* can be worked in defence of Error, they utterly repudiate; and the express declaration of Scripture, as to the past and future,—that such has been, and that such will be the case—they do not hesitate to set aside or explain away.

In disproof of what we cannot but feel to be a most serious error, we would remark, *that God's Moral Laws are ever supreme over the Physical.*

That the design of all creation, while eloquently typical of spiritual truth, was subsidiary to the accomplishment of spiritual results.

That God has ever thus dealt with the works of his hands, sustaining or destroying them, in connection with the spiritual condition of the creature.

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As the world was originally framed to minister to man's comfort and enjoyment; so that same world, is convulsed or dissolved, when spiritual wickedness is to be judged.

While a *new* heaven and a *new* earth, is the blessed confidence of God's redeemed people, "the heavens and the earth, *which are now*, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

If then, the harmony of the spiritual creation has been interrupted, and all conceivable violations of God's holy laws, are being daily committed—is it more, or even equally extraordinary, that disturbances in physical phenomena should also have been permitted?

Scripture testimony and experience, prove that such interferences on the part of Satan, are of a *very limited*

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character; but that they *have* taken place, and will again so, in a still more wonderful manner, cannot we think be reasonably disputed.

That the Magicians of Egypt, performed *miracles*, to invalidate the authority of Moses, we unhesitatingly believe; and that simply, because Scripture declares that it was so. To reduce such a narrative of events to a mere description of jugglery and imposture, we can only regard as an evidence of the influence, which the *true performer* of those miracles, is still enabled to exert upon the mind.

That Satan is sometimes invested with power over the Elements, is clearly established by the history of Job. That he is also an agent in the infliction of diseases and infirmities, is not less explicitly revealed. And that his emissaries can enter into the bodies

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of men and animals, and use their organization as an instrument for their own purposes—giving to it impulses, powers, and utterances, of which it is not naturally capable, wholly independent of the rightful occupant, — can only be doubted by those, who either reject a revelation altogether, or who feel at liberty to re-translate God's word into terms, more consistent with their finite pre-conceptions of the probable and the true.

That Satan accomplishes a vast amount of his designs, by deceptions and illusions practised upon our mind and senses, there cannot be a doubt; but that, under certain circumstances—impossible to be defined—the Devil has been, and will yet be enabled to manifest his power, in a physical or miraculous manner, the Bible emphatically declares.

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The assertions, therefore which have recently been advanced, by writers from whom we had hoped for better teaching, that the *latter form* of interference, ceased on the part of Satan, at, or shortly subsequent, to the first Advent of Christ,—and that its revival is not again to be expected;—we believe to be destitute of Scripture warranty, opposed to all inspired predictions, and unworthy of serious refutation.

Section XVIII.

That Possessions, whether by fallen angels or by disembodied spirits, were not *novelties*, though, very probably, more frequent than ordinary, at the time of our Saviour's sojourn upon the

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earth, may be inferred from the whole tenor of Scripture narrative.

The great peculiarity of the period, now referred to, was not that Devils, or rather Demons, possessed men; but the presence of Him, whose almighty power was manifested, in their subjection, and casting out.

It might, with equal plausibility be argued, that *Diseases*, as well as possession, were novelties—associated as the former almost invariably were with the exercise of the same miraculous expulsive energies,—but the real distinction is, that while we still feel and recognize the one, the power to detect the other, has been suspended; thus leading to the natural, though illogical conclusion, that possessions are no longer permitted.

How many of the facts, recorded in Scripture, are shown to have been the

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immediate result of supernatural causation; and which, without such disclosures, must necessarily have been referred to ordinary agency?

And who can doubt, reasoning from all analogy, that numberless conditions around us NOW, are attributable to similar influences from the unseen world—and that to an extent we can very inadequately imagine;—the conflict between light and darkness, only intensifying as it advances, and God's as well as Satan's purposes, being intimately connected with the existing conditions of thought and feeling, as well as with the events, now transacting upon the Earth?

What is the entire history of Sorcery, Magic, Divination, and Necromancy, in all their varied developments and pretensions, in every age and clime, but one uninterrupted proof, that

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Satanic power has been continuously exerted upon the Bodies, as well as upon the Spirits of Men?

Great as are the speculative difficulties of the subject, and impossible as it may be to determine the precise boundaries of the natural and the supernatural, no one, who submits himself to what God has revealed, can call in question the *reality* of such facts; or be otherwise than deeply impressed with the great importance attached to them, as well as awed by the unexampled severity of God's denunciations and judgments against them.

To imply that these were uttered against *imaginary* sins, is nothing less than to pour contempt upon the written Word; and to classify the phenomena, so condemned, under the head of by-gone superstitions, nervous

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irregularities, or mesmeric hallucinations, is one of those blasphemously compounded insults upon the Divine Author of the Book, in which it is difficult to decide, whether folly or presumption most predominate.

Section XIX.

It is very important to reflect, that *Miracles*, or the exercise of superhuman power on the part of God and Satan, have two very opposite purposes to fulfil; and that their mode of performance is correspondingly varied.

By our blessed Lord, his works were wrought to demonstrate his personality—to evince the Divinity of his power—as proofs of the nature of his

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mission,—and to accomplish Old Testament Predictions.

It was, on this latter ground, that Jesus especially rested his claims to Jewish belief; his own Miracles, not being intrinsically greater than those of Moses, Joshua, or Elisha, *but precisely those, which were foretold, as evidential of the true Messiah.*

God was in all cases acknowledged to be their source. They were openly performed;—for the most part, numerously attested;—and their direct object, was to establish Christ's right, to be accepted and acknowledged, as the King of Israel.

On the other hand, Satan—in his operations—ever seeks to be *concealed!* His object, is not openly to establish his authority, or to put forth power, ostensibly as from himself; but to make Man, apparently, the operator;

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—to transact his evil works *through* man, as if *by* man;—and this, with the intention of making him his willing but unconscious vassal, by urging him to researches and speculations, more and more imcompatible with his higher allegiance; while he endeavours to heighten the conviction, that the additional power, thus imparted, is really, *self-derived.*

Hence the nature of Satan's influences is often very obscure, not in the least suspected; while the intention of his scheming, is a gradual transference of power to man, which in its earliest actings, seems so clearly identified with the ordinary and the natural, as to justify the conclusion, that the after manifestations, are equally so.

Satan, probably in *all* cases, *begins* with the natural. It is his interest, if not his necessity so to do; and his

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subsequent actings are no doubt contingent upon circumstances, to a great extent, if not wholly, beyond his power to control; and leading to consequences, which the highest exercise of his sagacity, is unable to avert.

Sin, providentially, is ever short-sighted and inconsistent: and the intelligence of an Archangel, when enlisted in defence of a lie, can only more disastrously terminate, in confusion and defeat.

Section XX.

As a general feature of Satanic operations upon man, we should therefore expect a good deal that is strange and contradictory; interminglings of the ludicrous and the solemn—of falsehood

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and truth;—and not anticipate effects in any degree commensurate with the high angelic capacities of the great Deceiver himself.

The *Design* of his workings, even were his power unfettered, is in no shape intended to alarm the fears or shock with a sense of impropriety; but to suit his seductions to the knowledge and temper of the times, adapting them to the nature and actual state of the being he is ever striving to misdirect; and, under all possible fluctuations in man's social and intellectual condition, to suggest and encourage whatever may conduce, to a still wider departure from God.

The days of a blind, unquestioning superstition, are fast numbering; and to sway mankind, by an appeal to their fears or their devotion, is becoming increasingly difficult.

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The history of the last few years, witnesses to an unexampled development of human resources; and, when superficially judged, there would appear no assignable limit to what man may hereafter accomplish.

Intellect, as the great cause of success, is becoming more and more the object of worship; and through the intellect it is, that Satan's seductions, are now most successfully carried out.

To solve the unfathomable mystery of man's nature,—to unfold the constitution of his being,—and from an investigation of his structure, to classify all spiritual phenomena as mere functional activities of the frame,—have been the favourite speculations and pursuits of many earnest and able writers; and tempted, by the shallow plausibilities of a scientific materialism, numerous noble and inquiring minds

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have made shipwreck of their faith, and been submerged in the dark waters of infidelity and doubt.

The triumph of a system, so comfortless and soul-starving, can never long be sustained. Man's nature revolts, against protracted imprisonment in so arid and cropless a desert; and his religious instincts, in spite of his philosophy, ever crave for, and must obtain, some outlet for expression.

Section XXI.

To provide food for their gratification, while their false direction is secured, is the great problem on which Satan's subtilty is now so energetically employed; and in

MODERN SPIRITUALISM,

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we are presented, with one of the most singular and unexpected of his devices.

For our present purpose, it will be sufficient very briefly to refer to its gradual development and actual pretensions.

The leading principle, involved in mesmeric and other allied investigations, so singularly popularized of late, is the assumption, that Man possesses a power, unrestricted by the limits of his organization; and capable, when directed and energized by the will, of permeating and controlling the system of another.

To stimulate or suspend all bodily sensation—to depress or heighten the mental and moral faculties—to reduce man to the condition of an automaton, and inspire him with an intelligence and feelings not his own—and all this, by means of an influence or force, call

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it what we please, and derive it from within or from without, but virtually emanating from and regulated by man himself—are some of the boasted successes and gradually unfolded pretensions of modern philosophy.

It is asserted, that not only has it been experimentally demonstrated, that all our functions can be thus modified and manipulated, at man's will and pleasure,—but that *fresh* powers have been discovered, involving the exercise of human faculties, apart from the organs through which they are usually performed; and that, in this disassociated state, our senses and intellect and moral perceptions, are endued with an activity and elevation, of which they are utterly insusceptible, in a normal or ordinary condition.

Internal diseases, it is said, have been visually inspected, and intuitively

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healed. The records of the past have been recovered, and the future, prophetically disclosed. All obstacles arising from materiality, time, or space, have been overcome;—and man's nervous energy or Will, released from its generating organ, has been enabled to go forth and hold intercourse with the world which is beyond, and to return laden with information most important for the happiness and guidance of the inhabitants of earth.

Results, so astonishing and confounding, have been very reasonably regarded, as utterly subversive of a mere material hypothesis; and by a rapidly increasing number of observers, the admission, that man possesses a Spirit, as well as a Body, has been candidly conceded, and is now, enthusiastically taught.

Not only, however, has man's Spirit,

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by human science, been disenfranchised from subjection to the flesh, but we have been more recently informed, that a process has been discovered of *direct communication with the Dead;* enabling us to summon into our presence the Shades of the departed; and to question them on all subjects connected with the economy and employments of the spiritual world.

The reality of such a power, it is asserted, is attested by certain *physical manifestations;* and communications are assumed to be established with the spirit-world, by means of various knockings or movements, impressed upon different objects around us, whether in contact or otherwise, the meaning of which, very multiplied experience is supposed to have correctly ascertained; while the mode of their production, is ascribed to the agency

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of spirits, and is considered, by those most familiar with the facts, to be wholly inexplicable by any known laws with which we have, hitherto, been conversant.

By another sect of Philosophers,—whose confidence in the solvent powers of modern Science, seems boundless,—all idea of the *Supernatural*, is scornfully rejected; and involuntary or unconscious muscular movements—dominant ideas—electric, odyllic, or other forces—are confidently propounded, as the true solution of the mystery.

Such explanations, would undoubtedly be more satisfactory, did those who advance them, evince any adequate practical acquaintance with the phenomena, they are so eager to judge; and did they not uniformly resort to that rather antiquated, though con-

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venient device, of classifying under the heads of "the false" and "the delusive," all facts, which refuse to be coerced, within the limits of their gratuitous but despotic hypotheses.

A third, but comparatively a very small and unpopular section of inquirers, have ventured to investigate for themselves; and have avowed their decided conviction, that nothing less than SATANIC AGENCY, *is at all adequate to embrace or to account for the whole of the phenomena;* and they believe that the facts so closely resemble, if they are not absolutely identical with, the lying wonders which are prophetically described as specially characteristic of the last days, as to be rightly regarded, as introductory to some of those still more remarkable manifestations of evil, which are to accredit the pretensions of the last and literal Antichrist.

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Section XXII.

We do not, however, at the present moment, feel it needful, to enter into the details of the controversy; but are chiefly desirous of enforcing upon the reader's attention, *that the great interest and importance of the question lies not, in determining the reality or the fallacy of the facts, but in the spiritual consequences which have followed them!*

A Lie, *believed*—is, practically, a *Truth*, in its influence upon the mind; and it is a matter of perfect indifference to the "Father of lies," whether human faith and practice, be distorted by the fictitious, or the true.

Whether inexplicable noises have been heard, or unearthly appearances

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seen — or unnatural contact felt—or tables mysteriously moved—or writings or drawings unaccountably performed—abstractly considered — are points of very minor importance. But, whether these, or any other phenomena, have strongly attracted the attention of mankind, and, associated with supposed spiritual causation, have been taken advantage of as an unexpected opportunity of communicating with the world that is unseen; and, if man, has been thus tempted, to extend his inquiries beyond the boundaries which Scripture so distinctly defines; then, *all such phenomena, can no longer be estimated by the scale of their intrinsic value or insignificance, but by the nature and the extent of their spiritual re-action upon the mind.*

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Section XXIII.

It is owing to the forgetfulness of the important principle now enunciated, that two of the most prevalent objections, against the pretensions of modern spiritualism, are so frequently urged.

The facts themselves, are said to be too ABSURD, and the revelations too destitute of ORIGINALITY, to justify the supposition that they are prompted by Satan.

To this, we would reply, that if Satan's entire object be to deceive and mislead man, and if, as already pointed out, it is his interest to conceal his own agency, and to urge on his victim to acts and thinkings increasingly hostile to God, by means seemingly consistent with and apparently proceeding from

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man's natural powers—we can understand, why phenomena, trivial in themselves, but admirably adapted to excite curiosity and open up fresh ground for research, should be selected; and how facts of a more prominent and imposing description, would have been utterly unsuitable for such a purpose.

Experience proves, that slight interferences with the ordinary, are far more thrilling and exciting than larger manifestations of power.

The former, are felt to be connected with influences in close contact with ourselves; the latter, are regarded, as the expression of laws irregularly operative in the government of the universe.

The unexpected rustling of our bed-curtains, or the shadowy outlines of some moving form, would be far more disturbing than the sudden roll of dis-

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tant thunder, or the unexpected glare of meteoric light; and inexplicable movements in our chairs and tables, would really be more calculated to excite our apprehensions or our curiosity, than phenomena more remote, but, in themselves, of greater intrinsic importance.

The absence also of all *Originality*,—so palpably the case,—and the *contradictory*, and often *absurd* nature, of the communications purporting to be derived from supernatural sources,—instead of an objection, is precisely what ought to have been expected, admitting Satan to be their instigator.

His object, is not to widen the boundaries of man's knowledge, but to confuse and to confound the operations of the human mind; and to encourage, all thoughts or inquiries, which tend to lessen our allegiance, to the authority and principles of revealed truth.

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Satan cares not, what scientific theories are broached, as explanatory of his workings, or what speculations are entertained, if *He* is not suspected to be present; and if their direction be opposed to man's spiritual interests. Hence the effort, now making, to link on the natural with the supernatural, the scientific with the spiritual;—to break down all distinction between the visible and the invisible;—and so to mingle them, that *all things* seem brought within the range of legitimate inquiry, and the world of Matter and of Spirit, to be alike subjected, to the purposes and control of a fallen humanity.

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Section XXIV.

That Satan's devices have been eminently successful, and that through an instrumentality as strange as unexpected, the records of almost every civilised country, abundantly declare; and *one of the most striking features of the present movement, is the attempt to establish and legitimise a power on the part of man, of direct communication with the spiritual world; and to divest it of that sense of guilt, and of that awe and solemnity, with which it has ever been regarded in ages that are past.*

We are, in plain truth,—however, distasteful the assertion,—under the delusive sanction and disguise of a scientific investigation, reviving and po-

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pularising, the practice of DEMONOLOGY and WITCHCRAFT; in open defiance of all those fearful threatenings and penalties, which God has so invariably attached to them.

Man is striving to take his '*Here*' and his '*Hereafter*,' into his own hands;—to penetrate every mystery of his being;—to determine the extent of his responsibility in this world and the next;—to become a revelation to himself;—*TO DO WITHOUT GOD!* And we see around us, those conditions of thought and practice, which are preparatory to that clearly predicted manifestation of evil, which is headed up under the reign of the last and personal Antichrist, whom Satan directly energises, and whose authority he miraculously attests.

"*YE SHALL BE AS GODS*," was the archdeceiver's first temptation;

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and "I AM GOD," shall be the culminating utterance of man's daring and protracted Revolt!

Section XXV.

It is quite impossible, to over-estimate the *evil tendency* of the movement we are now considering; or too earnestly to warn all, against foolishly tampering with what is at once so dangerous in principle, so unholy in its fruits.

There is not a mystery, or a doctrine of the christian faith, which has not been made the subject of impious investigation and attack;—and to bring Scripture into disrepute, and under modernised pretences, to re-inculcate the falsehoods, that Sin is but an accident—

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that a world's Regeneration and man's Salvation, can be effected by something else, than the Blood and Righteousness of Christ—and that a coming age of peace and happiness, is the promised recompense of past toils and present progress—are the old foundation lies, which Philosophy, instead of Superstition, is now invoked to substantiate.

However harmless and unimportant the outward phenomena may appear, there is ample evidence to prove, that—instrumentally—they are a means of vast spiritual evil. And even admitting, for the sake of argument, *that all the facts, now on record, either can, or will hereafter, be philosophically explained*, the true nature and origin of modern Spiritualism is not the less certain, nor is the right conduct of christians in regard to it, the less clear.

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Section XXVI.

Were our conclusions, ever dependent upon personal investigation, and never definitely settled until we had acquired demonstrative proof of their soundness, we must pass out of existence uninformed, as to the truth or fallacy, of the great majority of questions, most essential for us to decide.

But, with an open Bible before us, as our great court of appeal, and being promised the direct teaching of its Divine Inspirer, under all circumstances of difficulty and temptation, we are not left to the deceptive guidance of a finite sagacity, or to the wayward impulses of a corrupted heart, but are enabled to view all things in that light which

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beams down from above, and to analyse them by a wisdom, of which, God Himself, is the source.

It is because we dishonor the Scriptures of God's truth, that our judgments are so beclouded, and Satan's devices so successful!

By the greater number of professing christians, the study of *Prophecy*, is either neglected, or condemned; and what God has declared to be "a light that shineth in a dark place," we, in our presumption, have pronounced to be impenetrably obscure.

Hence the utter misapprehension, which so extensively prevails, as to the character and *End* of the present Dispensation. Peace and stability are fondly anticipated, where conflict and destruction are distinctly foretold; and so intense is the deception, that by many, the workings of Satan, are con-

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founded with the operations of the *Holy Ghost!*

We look confidently forward to a '*coming Glory*;' but raise the superstructure out of materials, which Jehovah tells us, he is going to destroy.

We talk of a '*coming Man*,' but realize not the presence of Him, who alone can re-establish righteousness and peace upon the earth; unmindful of that fierce baptism of fire, which is the predicted precursor of His reign.

"For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh."

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman,

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hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

The world is now tremulous with the premonitory vibrations of its approaching change. The impress of an unparalled activity and speed, is stamped upon all human affairs. The whole family of man seems restless with a vague expectancy. And if God's everlasting truth is to be trusted, we are now entering upon the terminating scenes, of Sin's protracted and eventful history,—and a crisis of tribulation and human anguish, must, sooner or later, be passed through, "such as never was, since there was a nation, unto that same time."

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"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and *upon the Earth*, distress of nations, with perplexity;—the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the Earth."

And "unclean spirits of devils, *working miracles*, shall go forth unto the kings of the Earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

And to the Antichrist, "the devil will give his power, and his seat, and great authority; even to him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all *power and signs, and lying wonders;* and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, *because*, they received not the love of

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the truth, that they might be saved."

"And for *this cause*, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should *believe a* LIE; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness!"

Such is the unutterably solemn history, written by the Holy Spirit, of those tremendous events, which shall usher in CHRIST'S second coming; and whatever may be the day-dreams of the Sceptic—the Politician—the Philanthropist—or the Divine—it is as certain to be realized, as that God himself is true!

Terrible, beyond all conception, as will be the crisis now preparing, to an ungodly World—it is, nevertheless, to a groaning creation, and to a longing, waiting Church—but the fulfilment of Jehovah's everlasting Covenant; the day, "when the Lord bindeth up the

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breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."

"And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto HIM that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB, for ever and ever!"

THE END.

GEORGE LOVEJOY, PRINTER, READING.

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